

STUDENT HANDBOOK



**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT PROGRAM
COMOX VALLEY**

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PROGRAM STAFF

The Comox Valley International Student Program consists of seven office staff members. Under the direction of Mr. Greg Kochanuk, District Principal, the CVISP staff is your support resource throughout the school year. Additionally, your secondary school will have an International Student Program Support Teacher (ISPST) whom you will meet during orientation and see daily on regular school days. Your ISPST will be leading you through most of orientation. Be sure to introduce yourself and make an effort to get to know your ISPST during orientation.

CVISP CONTACT INFORMATION AND LOCATION

Mr. Greg Kochanuk	District Principal	Greg.Kochanuk@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Josie Jiang	Senior Manager	Josie.Jiang@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Melissa Jobe	Registrar & RCIC	Melissa.Jobe@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Amy Ho	Senior Administrative Assistant & Activity Coordinator	Amy.Ho@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Tanya Persson	Administrative Assistant	Tanay.Persson@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Youn Hee Edmonds	Homestay Supervisor & Korean Marketing Representative	Younhee.Edmonds@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Krista Oliphant	Homestay Coordinator	Krista.Oliphant@sd71.bc.ca
Comox Valley International Student Program Office Address 2085 Wallace Ave, Comox, BC, Canada V9M 1W4		
Office Phone Number	1.250.703.2904	
Office email address	isponline@sd71.bc.ca	
Phone number (Youn Hee Edmonds)	1.250.218.9605 (must leave a message)	
Phone number (Krista Oliphant)	1.250.218.9345 (must leave a message)	
Weekend Emergency phone number	1.250.703.6938	
Website	www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com	
Facebook	www.facebook.com/studycomoxvalley	
Instagram	comoxvalleyisp	

SECONDARY SCHOOL ISP STAFF

The secondary school ISP team is responsible for supporting you in the following ways:

- Ensuring you are treated respectfully by students and staff
- Revising your course schedule
- Ensuring you have the appropriate credits to graduate then enter college/university
- Speaking to your teachers when you need help or do not understand
- Organizing tutors
- Helping you to register for International Program sponsored activities
- Providing an international student 'lounge' at lunch time
- Helping you connect with extracurricular sponsors

SCHOOL	NAME	POSITION	EMAIL
Vanier Secondary	Ms. Leah Baron	ESL/ISPST Teacher	Leah.Baron@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Lee McKillican	Vice Principal	Lee.Mckillican@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lindy Oddleifson	Sr. Admin Assistant	Lindy.Oddleifson@sd71.bc.ca
Highland Secondary	Ms. Helen Oliphant	ESL/ISPST Teacher	Helen.Oliphant@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Stephanie Baker	Vice Principal	Stephanie.Baker@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lucianne Aplocins	Sr. Admin Assistant	Lucianne.Aplocins@sd71.bc.ca
Isfeld Secondary	Ms. Victoria Mulrooney	ESL/ISPST Teacher	Victoria.Mulrooney@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Brian McAskill	Principal	Brian.Mcaskill@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Dave Miller	Vice Principal	Dave.Miller@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lisa Nicholls	Sr. Admin. Assistant	Lisa.nicholls@sd71.bc.ca
Lake Trail	Ms. Alissa Pratt	Vice Principal	Alissa.Pratt@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Candice Pisto	Sr. Admin. Assistant	Candice.Pisto@sd71.bc.ca

YOUR STATUS IN CANADA

As an international student, you have **temporary resident status** in Canada. Maintaining your status is very important. Pay close attention to expiry dates on your passport, visa and permit.

In some situations, you may need to apply for, or extend, a study permit or visitor visa while you are here. Ms. Jobe is a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC) and an **authorized representative** who can make applications to Canadian Immigration (IRCC) on your behalf. Please enquire with our office if you wish to utilize our immigration services.

***Remember to keep your immigration documents in a safe place – do not carry your passport or permits around in your backpack or bag.**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AGREEMENT REVIEW

The rules of conduct found in the International Student Agreement must be followed by all students entering and enrolled in the CVISP. You have already signed off on these rules with your agent and/or your parents as it is part of the application process to enter the CVISP. The CVISP will review this document with you during orientation. Please refer to **Appendix A** for a copy of the International Student Agreement.

CURFEW

International Student Program curfews are as follow:

Grade 7 & 8	8:00pm 9:00pm	Sunday through Thursday Friday and Saturday
Grade 9 & 10	9:00pm 10:00pm	Sunday through Thursday Friday and Saturday
Grade 11 & 12	10:00pm 12:00am	Sunday through Thursday Friday and Saturday

MEDICAL

WHAT HAPPENS IF I GET SICK?

If you get sick, tell your host family right away. Do not be shy as your host family is there to help you through difficult situations. Your host family will take you to the doctor if necessary. This is why you have Guard.Me medical insurance. You will be provided with a medical insurance card and coverage description during orientation.

British Columbia's Medical Service Plan (MSP) is obtained for all students who study in BC for more than five months. International students must reside in BC for three (3) months before they are eligible for MSP. The Guard.Me insurance you receive for your first three (3) months in the CVISP provides the best possible coverage for you until you are enrolled in MSP by the CVISP. In addition to the Guard.Me coverage you received when you arrived, you will receive the MSP card after three months with our program.

Some of the medical insurance benefits provided include; prescription medication, physiotherapy and speech therapy, medical equipment and supplies, emergency transport, paramedical services, accidental dental & emergency dental care, eye exams, excursions and travel outside of British Columbia & Canada.

Remember these key points throughout your study in the CVISP.

- **Students must keep their medical cards or policy information with them at all times.**
- You must present your medical card (MSP or Guard.Me) at the time of a doctor's visit. Students on MSP pay no fees for a visit to the doctor. Students on private insurance including Guard.Me may have to pay the doctor's office (\$75.00 - \$100.00) per visit. These students may then make a claim for reimbursement. Your host family can help you make a claim. It is important to note that there are also approved CVISP walk-in medical clinics in the Comox Valley which will do direct billing for you. Be sure to consult your host parents for these approved CVISP walk in medical clinics;

1. Washington Park Medical Clinic (2nd floor of the Superstore)

757 Ryan Road
Courtenay, BC V9N 1N3
250.334.9241

2. Walmart Courtenay Medical Clinic

3199 Cliffe Avenue
Courtenay, BC V9N 2L9
250.898.8998

- Medical insurance plans do not pay for over the counter medicine. Students who need medicine will be given prescriptions which are purchased at a pharmacy. Students who are covered under the Guard.Me plan can make a claim for prescription costs and may receive reimbursement.

Here is some information about accessing Urgent Care at **North Island Hospital Comox Valley**, located at 101 Lerwick Road in Courtenay. (250-331-5900)

- If you require urgent care at the Emergency Room, let the hospital know that you are an International Student going to school here. **It is important to have your MSP card and/or your Guard.me card with you if at all possible.** If you have a Study Permit, please bring that to the hospital as well - students with a study permit are charged a lower rate (often around \$700 to \$900 less)
- If you DO NOT have your MSP or Guard.me insurance card with you when you seek care at the Emergency Room, be sure to return to the hospital and show them your insurance card and your Study Permit (if you have one). This way the hospital can send the bill for your care directly to the insurance company
- If you need to be admitted to the hospital, arrangements can be made for the hospital to bill Guard.me directly for covered benefits as outlined in the policy
- If you are sick, it is best to go to a walk-in clinic. However, if you require care outside of clinic hours, or your medical issue is potentially life-threatening, you **MUST** go to the hospital Emergency Room

****Please note - Your medical coverage is only valid during your Program dates. In order for you to have medical coverage - please inform our office if you are going to be in Canada outside of these dates. ******

Remember; always have your medical insurance cards with you. They fit into your purse, wallet or backpack easily. Here are examples of a Guard.Me insurance card and an MSP card:



Visit <https://www.guard.me/> for more information on [Guard.Me's standard policy](#), claim forms, and general information.

UNCOMFORTABLE BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

Behaviour by others that causes us to feel uncomfortable, even afraid, can be referred to as abusive. Abuse is when a person hurts another person verbally, physically, or sexually. An abusive situation happens when someone continuously calls another person hurtful names. Other examples of abuse are when someone hits another person or when someone forces another person to do something when he/she does not want to do it.

In Canada, citizens are protected from this behaviour by Canadian law and no one has the right to abuse another person. If you find yourself in an abusive situation or if someone makes you feel uncomfortable, trust your feelings and speak to a CVISP staff person. This could be your teacher, a school counselor or any of the CVISP staff.

Behaviours that could make you feel uncomfortable:

- Wanting to spend time alone with you by making excuses to go places or have others leave
- Doing things to you that involve physical contact. For example, back rubs, massages, wanting to wash you
- Accidentally on purpose touching your private parts, brushing against them, rubbing their body against yours
- Looking at or touching your body and saying it is an inspection of how you are developing
- Always coming into your room while you are undressed or into the bathroom without knocking or asking
- Not respecting your privacy; not allowing you to close your bedroom door or the bathroom door
- Saying sexual things about your body or how you dress
- Talking to you about sexual things that he/she has done
- Hitting you or threatening to use physical force
- Telling you not to tell his/her spouse or other people about things that happen between you
- Walking around the house without clothes on

IMPORTANT: If someone does things to you or with you that make you feel uncomfortable or that you do not like, immediately tell your teacher, a school counselor, Mr. Greg Kochanuk, Ms. Youn Hee Edmonds/Ms. Krista Oliphant, the Host Family coordinators, or Ms. Josie Jiang, Senior Manager from the CVISP.

STUDENT TRAVEL

As the legal custodian of each CVISP student while in Canada, safety is our number one priority. When CVISP students are at school, in the community and with their host families, the CVISP is confident that they are safe. CVISP students will want to travel outside of the Comox Valley for sightseeing, trips with their host family or even to visit relatives in another city or country. Whatever the reason, you must complete an “Out of District Travel Request Form” so the CVISP can ensure your safety.

You must complete an “Out of District Travel Request Form” when:

- You plan to travel outside the Comox Valley **with** your host family for **more** than three (3) nights

- You plan to travel outside the Comox Valley without your host family for any length of time. THIS INCLUDES ANY TRAVEL WITH YOUR NATURAL PARENTS

When you want to leave the Comox Valley:

- You must complete the “Out of District Travel Request Form” with your host family
- Your host parents must verify the information and consent to the arrangements
- Your natural parents must send an email confirming their approval of your travel plans to Amy.Ho@sd71.bc.ca
- Requests not received **at least five (5) working days** prior to your intended departure date may be denied
- CVISP students who travel outside of the Comox Valley without approval will be subject to disciplinary action

STUDENT TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

The “*Out of District Travel Request Form*” is a fillable form located on the CVISP website at www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestatravel-request-form/. Be sure to complete the form with your host family.

TRAVEL TO THE USA PROTOCOL

Protocol is in place that permits CVISP students to travel to the USA. The above mentioned “*Out of District Travel Request Form*” and process must be completed. Additionally, a “*USA Travel – Host Parent Release Waiver*” must be completed by you and your host parents, and a “*USA Travel - Parent Guardian Release Waiver*” must be completed by your natural parents. Please contact your ISPST or the CVISP office for a copy of the above two noted USA Travel Waivers.

PROGRAM DEPARTURE PROTOCOL

Non Graduating Students – students who do not write Provincial exams are advised to book departure flights 1-3 days after their last day of classes or by June 21, 2024.

Graduating Students – should plan to depart 2 – 3 days after their last exam or by June 30th.

The CVISP also offers ESL Summer Camps for all students wanting to stay in the Comox Valley and receive extra ESL instruction. Please contact the CVISP for more details at isponline@sd71.bc.ca.

YOUR SCHOOL PROGRAM

All students will be assessed to see if they need ESL services. Sometimes, even though you may have been studying English for a few years, you will still need a special class to help you become better at reading, writing and speaking English. You will be informed if you need this class and the school counselor will include time for ESL in your class schedule. If the counselor or ISPST says that you must take an ESL course, look at this as a chance to develop your skills; a chance to prepare yourself for courses that will demand a greater knowledge of English.

Some students study in the CVISP for a semester or a full year program to concentrate on improving their English and having a cultural experience. In this case, they may choose from a wide variety of courses to complete their timetable. This is an opportunity to try classes not available to you in your home country. If there are some subjects that you must take in Canada, be sure to let the school counselor know and indicate them on your CVISP application form.

Some students come to Canada in order to achieve the High School Graduation Diploma (known in B.C. as a Dogwood Certificate). In this case, you will want to achieve your very best. Your English skills must be at a high level of proficiency before you can attempt many courses. Your teachers do not want you to become discouraged. All courses that you take count as credits towards your graduation. If you plan to graduate from high school in BC, then tell the counselor and ISPST so she/he can begin to plan an appropriate course of studies for you. This is typically a reminder as the ISPST teacher will already know this based on your application form.

If you are having difficulty understanding your homework assignments or you feel you are in a course where the level of English is too difficult for you, make an appointment with the school counselor or ISPST. If you feel that having a tutor would help you, and your parents are prepared to pay this expense, you should speak to your ISPST who will help you arrange for a tutor in conjunction with Mr. Greg Kochanuk, District Principal and the CVISP office.

Plan to spend several hours each night during the week on homework. Sometimes you may not have homework in all of your subjects. You can still improve your English during this time by watching English television or practicing your conversation skills with your host family.

Although we know that you will want to converse online in your own language with your friends, you should try to limit the time you spend on this activity. Your English language skills will not improve if you spend too much time communicating in your native language.

Being tired is the main reason students do not adjust to a new school, new friends and new responsibilities. Some students will stay up too late, working or talking on the computer. Try not to get into this habit. In Canada, we think that students should have 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night in order to remain healthy and alert in school.

Also, even though the food may seem different to you, it is important to eat a healthy breakfast each morning to get energy for the day's activities. If you prefer rice or something different in the morning, please let your host family know.

ACTIVITIES

A wide variety of extracurricular activities are strongly encouraged to broaden your educational experience in Canada. Your ISPST can help you become involved in many activities including sports, fine arts, music and band, clubs, theatre, outdoor recreation and dance.

Becoming involved in your school's clubs or athletic teams is an excellent way to improve your English! You may even receive extra credit for your involvement!

Your host parents are a great resource to help you find extracurricular activities. If you require transportation to and from an activity, your host parents should provide this for you within reason.

The CVISP also arranges special activities for international students twice per month. You, your homestay parents, and your ISPST will be sent information on how and when to sign up for activities. It is important that we have your email address as this is the only way for you to receive sign-up instructions. Always ask your homestay parents or ISPST if you need help with an activity sign-up process. The yearly Activity Schedule is found on the [CVISP website](#).

HOST FAMILY

SUCCESS IN A HOST FAMILY

Our host families play an important role in helping students learn English and understand the Canadian culture.

The following guidelines will help you be successful in your host family experience:

- Be polite and courteous with all members of your host family. Talk to them about your day, and ask about theirs. Use "please" and "thank you" often
- Treat the home and its possessions in a caring, respectful manner. Be careful to close and lock doors and windows as requested by the family
- Be sure to understand house rules about use of showers, telephones, and computers, and respect time limits given
- Come home at the agreed upon time after school. If you want to miss a meal, ask your host family, at least an hour before mealtime. Follow the evening curfew rules, and be sure to text or phone if an emergency comes up and you are delayed
- If you would like to have a meal or to stay overnight at a friend's home, be sure to ask permission from your host family
- If your host family takes you on day trips, you are free to enjoy them. If your host family would like to take you on an overnight trip, or if you would like to travel with a friend, be sure to fill in the travel form required by the School District at least one week before the event
- We expect students to keep their rooms clean and tidy, and to share in household chores such as cleaning the bathroom, vacuuming, or mowing the lawn. Offering assistance at times is a nice thing to do.
- If you are lonely, or worried, or sick, be sure to talk to your host parents. They may be able to help you. It is a normal feeling to be worried or sad sometimes, and parents understand those feelings
- You are seen as a representative of your country. Do not use alcohol or illegal drugs, drive motorized vehicles, or participate in activities that could be considered dangerous. You are not allowed to use trampolines, to swim in a location without a lifeguard, or to participate in sports on the water without a life jacket. If you are not sure about an activity, check with Ms. Youn Hee Edmonds (250-218-9605), Ms. Krista Oliphant (250-218-9345) the Program Principal, Mr. Greg Kochanuk or Ms. Josie Jiang, Senior Manager (250-703-2904)
- Your host parents are your family away from home. Let them know you appreciate them by remembering birthdays and special occasions. In Canada, it is customary to give a small gift or card on such occasions. It is important to know gifts do not have to be expensive to be special

HOST FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

- Homestay families expect that students become part of the family. This means students will be home for dinner. They expect students to be involved in family activities and celebrations. They expect students to help in the home with chores
- Homestay families expect students will talk with the family every day. They expect all people in the household to greet each other and discuss the day's activities

- Homestay families expect students to want to learn about Canadian culture and participate in new experiences
- Homestay families expect students will be interested in learning to speak English. They expect students will spend time sitting and talking with the family members
- Homestay families expect students want to be successful at school. They expect students will go to school, and work hard at their homework
- Homestay families expect students to learn the homestay family rules and guidelines and to follow them
- Homestay families expect students to tell the family if the student has a problem in the homestay. Problems cannot be solved if they don't know there is a problem.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR HOST FAMILY

- A private bedroom
- Three wholesome meals a day and snacks as required
- A quiet, adequately lit and heated study space
- Hot water and facilities for daily bathing
- Laundry (you may be expected to do your own laundry)
- Emotional support if you feel homesickness, are having difficulties at school, etc.
- Academic support (help with homework if possible, communication with teachers, attendance at parent-teacher-student interview, etc.)
- Inclusion in family outings, trips to restaurants, special occasions, recreational activities
- Access to the common living areas of the house

FOOD AND TABLE MANNERS

Canada is a multicultural country where individual freedom is important. Each host family will have different ideas about food and table manners. You should watch your host family and listen carefully to learn Canadian customs.

To show good manners, please refrain from these food and table manners:

- Slurping soup or noodles. Although this is acceptable in some cultures, it is generally thought of as poor table manners in Canada
- Eating off your knife, or licking it
- Reaching across the table for things that are not close to you
- Speaking with food in your mouth
- Chewing food with your mouth open
- To show good manners, you are encouraged to perform these food and table manners:
- Wash your hands before you sit down to eat
- Take off your hat before you sit down to eat
- Wait until other people start eating before you start
- Ask "please pass me the..." instead of reaching

- Wait until everyone is finished eating before you leave the table
- Remove your own dishes from the table and offer to help with meal cleanup
- Try new foods - you may like them!

VARIATIONS BETWEEN HOST FAMILIES IN CANADA

Take the time to learn about your host family. All families are different and have specific traditions. For example:

- Some families say "grace" (a prayer) before meals
- Some families wait until everyone is seated before anyone eats
- Some families put a plate in front of everyone with the food already on, while some put serving dishes on the table for people to help themselves
- Some families expect you to eat everything on your plate. Others do not mind if you leave some food

In some countries the preparation of food and cleanup is considered "women's work". In Canada men and boys cook, do dishes, and do housework. Your host family may expect you to help with these things whether you are a boy or girl. If you do not know how, you should ask to be shown.

ADJUSTING TO CANADIAN FOOD

It may be difficult at first for you to adjust to Canadian food. If you find yourself in this situation, tell your host family about it and ask them for help. You can ask for smaller portions or more food if quantity is an issue. Open communication with your host family is vital to your success in the CVISP. Maybe you could cook some of your favourite foods from your home country with your host family!

DEALING WITH CULTURE SHOCK

- Learn as much as you can about Canadian culture
- It is normal to feel scared and worried when you are in a new culture
- Living in a new culture is a change. Change can sometimes be difficult. You have experienced many changes in your life; this is one more change
- Know that your feelings will change. It will get better
- Look for solutions to specific problems one at a time
- Look after your health. Eat well, sleep well and take good care of yourself
- Keep in touch with your family and friends at home. Tell them what you are learning
- Spend time with others. Don't stay alone. Do things with your host family, visit your other international students
- Accept the way Canadians do things. Canadian culture is not better or worse than other cultures. All cultures have differences
- Remember why you came. You knew it would be different
- Don't be hard on yourself. Things will get better in time. Celebrate your successes

COMMUNICATION

VERBAL

- Communication Style: Canadians are relatively indirect communicators; they try to avoid creating conflict by taking careful measures to remain polite throughout discussion. This usually involves making hints that vaguely communicate their message without 'rocking the boat'. Nevertheless, communication is not so indirect that one has to decipher it. Canadians tend to speak clearly enough that their intention and meaning is often apparent through careful word choice. They tend to disagree openly but respectfully.
- Polite (or at least we like to think so): please & thank-you are very important words for Canadians:
 - Always say "please" when asking someone for help.
- Linguistics: Canadians often punctuate sentences with the word 'eh' (pronounced 'ay').
- Interruptions: People generally consider interruptions to be rude and do not appreciate them.

NON-VERBAL

- Eye Contact: Eye contact should be maintained directly and broken intermittently. People often make enough eye contact to show their sincerity, but do not hold it for long durations to the point it seems scrutinising. Neglecting to make eye contact during a conversation can signify boredom or disinterest.
- Physical Contact: Canadians tend not to touch each other much during casual conversation. Good friends may hug, but people are generally not tactile with those they are not close with. A man showing a great deal of physical contact to a woman (particularly in the workplace) can be seen as sexual harassment.
- Personal Space: Canadians do not appreciate it when others invade their personal space, and often keep about an arm's length distance between themselves (as well as in crowded situations, such as queues).

CANADIAN ETIQUETTE

BASIC ETIQUETTE

- It is often considered impolite to ask a [direct](#) question about someone's salary, wealth, weight or age. Asking personal questions about one's marriage or relationship can also be seen as an invasion of privacy. Similarly, some people become very uncomfortable when asked about their political affiliations or who they voted for.
- Spitting in public is considered rude.
- If there is a line for something, always queue and wait for your turn.
- To call over a waiter or person of service, do not wave or yell. Instead, keep an eye out for them until they make eye contact, and then nod or raise your hand. You can also gently say "excuse me" as they pass by.
- Loudly clearing one's throat can be seen as antagonising.
- Yelling and strong outbursts of emotion are not appropriate behaviours in public.
- It is very rude to speak with your mouth full of food.

- If someone is using a cash point (ATM) in front of you, divert your gaze away from them and stand a few feet away to give them privacy.
- Canadians are quite patient and are therefore unlikely to appear pushy or frantic for time in casual situations. That being said, they are very punctual people and expect promptness. It is not appropriate to be more than 10-15 minutes late to an appointment without warning the person beforehand.

VISITING

- Arrange a visit before going to a Canadian's house. Do not arrive unannounced or bring friends and family with you unless you have asked them beforehand.
- Ask whether you should take off your shoes before entering someone's home.
- When eating at someone's house and they ask whether you would like more food or not, it is okay to decline or accept depending on how hungry you are. Neither is considered rude.
- Offer to help clean up the meal with your host when everyone has finished eating.

TIPPING

- Waiters, waitresses and service attendants expect tips to make their living. Accordingly, restaurants that offer table service do not include the service charge in the cost of the bill.
- Canadians usually tip 15-20% of the cost of the meal as a general standard. More or less can be tipped depending on the quality of the service.
- Taxi drivers, hairdressers and barbers also expect similar tip percentages.
- Bell hops or valet parkers only expect about \$1 as a tip.

GIFTS

- Gifts are usually only given on special occasions and are almost always accompanied with a card.
- People tend to open gifts in front of the giver, either upon receive them or later along with other presents.
- For occasions that require a gift (e.g. birthday, wedding, baby shower), a modest value of about \$25 is acceptable unless you know the recipient very well.

CANADIAN CULTURAL NORMS

Important – these are generalizations and not stereotypes

Cultural norms will vary from family to family and not all families will “follow” the norms listed below.

FOOD

- Breakfast – cereal, toast, etc. – usually family members make their own breakfast (unless there are young kids in home)
- Lunch – sandwich or leftovers – usually people make their own lunch (not “Mom”).
- Dinner – wide variety depending on family - more “English” based – meat/starch/vegetable. Raw vegetables are common. Food dished up on plates (not many dishes where people help themselves). Families usually eat dinner together at the table. For many families,

dinner is an important time to talk about how their day went/how things are going. Dinner is the main/big meal of the day.

- Grocery shopping is usually not done daily – once a week
- Leftovers are common – 2-3 days old is not unusual
- Dinner – most often between 5:30-6:30pm

BATHROOM

- Showers – 10 min max (hot water tanks)
- No water on floor or around sink – water can damage the material called ‘dry wall’ which is used in housing construction.
- Turn the bathroom fan on when showering – this protects against mold growth and drywall damage
- Only toilet paper goes in toilet (and only 5-6 ‘squares’) – (some areas on septic tanks)

“BIGGER” CULTURE NORMS

- Honesty is important. When there is a mistake or a problem, be open and honest – hiding, deception, dishonesty may upset your homestay parents.
- Conflict resolution – always best to discuss the situation to see if issues can be resolved.
- Gender roles – really vary between families. Still generally the “norm” that the Mom runs the household. Parents usually share childcare responsibilities/duties. Generally, both mother and father work outside the home.
- Pets – tend to be treated as “children” and are part of the family. Abuse (verbal or physical) is not tolerated.
- Attitudes towards “sex” – Canadians might seem conservative to some cultures/really open to others. When it comes to talking about it in a broader sense, Canadians are more open. On an individual level, more conservative/private about it. Sex education, including birth control, is openly talked about (again in a broader sense.....)
- Religion – really depends on the homestay. Canadian homestays OK with others practicing any religion they choose and people of different religious backgrounds living together can/will accommodate each other. If a homestay family does practice a religion, it is entirely up to the student if they are interested in going to a service
- Household responsibilities – people are expected to clean up after themselves. If you make a mess, clean it up. There is no maid service in any homestay! Specific expectations/chores vary in families and are age appropriate
- Cigarette smoking (including Vaping) – As per your Agreement with the CVISP 1(d) smoking is prohibited. Laws in Canada do not allow smoking in any public building, within 3-6 meters of a door and in many public parks. Minimum age to purchase cigarettes or vape products is 19 years
- Sarcasm or Irony – Canadians sometimes have a sarcastic sense of humour - this does not always translate.

“SMALLER” CULTURAL NORMS

- Shoes – most homes take shoes off at door
- Umbrellas – don’t use all that often....

-
- Weather – love/often talk about the weather – most common “small talk”
 - Walking - used to walking to get to school, bus stop, etc. Tend to walk fast
 - Closed doors – means “please leave me alone”
 - Hockey – is a popular sport in Canada, but not everyone loves/watches/follows it
 - Opposite sex sleepovers (either just friends or more) – NOT OK in most Canadian families
 - Riding the bus – offer seat to elderly people (or pregnant). Usually will say “thank you” to driver when getting off the bus
 - Laundry – done in full batches. Some families do once a week on “laundry day”

STUDENT & HOST FAMILY “HOMEWORK”

Student Name _____

(Kindly tell your host family how to say your name correctly.)

Host Family Name _____

(Kindly tell your student what they should call each person in your home.)

Please ask these questions of your homestay family and write the answer in the space provided. Keep a copy in your bedroom for your reference:

Meals/Food

These are the foods that I like to eat: _____

These are the foods that I do not like to eat: _____

These are foods that I cannot eat: _____

Do I make my own breakfast, or will you make it for me? _____

I normally eat the following for breakfast: _____

What may I have for breakfast in my homestay? _____

I normally eat the following for lunch: _____

What foods may I have for my school lunch? _____

What time do we eat dinner? _____

I am used to eating at this time: _____

What can I do to help you to prepare dinner or to clean up after? _____

May I come with you when you shop for groceries? Yes No

May I prepare a meal for your family sometime? Yes No

Schedule

School Days

What time should I get up? _____

Will you wake me or should I use an alarm clock? _____

What time do I need to leave for school to be on time? _____

What time do you want me to come home from school? _____

What time does everyone go to bed? _____

Weekends/Holidays

What time should I get up? _____

What time does everyone go to bed? _____

Laundry

Who does the laundry? _____

When? _____

How? _____

Where can I hang wet clothes? _____

Bathroom

Which bathroom do I use? _____

When may I shower or take a bath? _____

How long may I take for my shower or bath? _____

Please show me how to use the shower/bath and where to place bathroom garbage.

Telephone

Please tell me about using the telephone.

What is the house phone number? _____

When may I make calls? _____

When may I receive calls? _____

How long may I stay on the line? _____

I know I need to use a prepaid phone card to make long distance calls. Yes No

Where can I buy a prepaid phone card if needed? _____

Computer

May I use your computer? Yes No

To play games? Yes No

To do homework? Yes No

To send and receive e-mail? Yes No

Please tell me and show me how I will get to and from school.

Could you please show me your home on a map.

Could you please show me where my friends live in homestay.

What chores would you like me to do? _____

Are there any special rules for your home? _____

Where can I buy personal items and gifts to take home? _____

Where can I do my banking, cash traveler's cheques, etc.? _____

May I invite my friends over? Yes No

I would like you to know this about me?: _____

Is there anything that you would like to tell me about you or your family? _____

I would like to know this about you or your family: _____

APPENDIX A

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AGREEMENT

Please review this document carefully. This document creates a legally binding agreement for participation in the Board of Education of School District No. 71 Comox Valley's International Student Program.

Introduction:

The Board of Education of School District No. 71 Comox Valley (the "School District"), wishes to provide a challenging and exciting program to students studying in our International Program. This Agreement sets out the terms on which a student is accepted into the program and the obligations on those students and their families.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

When this agreement is binding:

This Agreement is not binding upon the School District until it is signed by a parent or guardian of the student and the student applying for admission, is accepted by the School District and an offer of admission is made to the student by the School District, and all tuition fees are paid.

Placement

While the School District takes into consideration requests for placement at a particular school, the final decision on any placement is determined solely by the School District, taking into account space availability and the appropriate program for the student based on the School District's assessment.

What I am agreeing to:

1. I agree that as a condition of participating in the School District's International Programs that my child:
 - a. must comply with the laws of Canada and British Columbia;
 - b. must comply with the School and School District Rules, Policies and Code of Conduct including the School District's Computer and Internet Access Responsible Use Agreement.
 - c. must comply with the terms of this International Student Agreement;
 - d. must not use drugs or alcohol or smoke;
 - e. must not own, rent or drive a motor vehicle;
 - f. must comply with all Homestay terms set out in this Agreement, and obey family rules and show respect for members of the Homestay family;
 - g. must not change Homestay arrangements without the consent of the School District, District Principal, International Student Program or designate;
 - h. must attend all registered classes in the International Program, unless unable by reason of illness or injury to do so and must provide a note from a Parent, guardian or Homestay family for any absences;
 - i. must not withdraw from courses without consent of school officials, and may not substitute online courses for the equivalent in-class course;
 - j. must complete homework as assigned;
 - k. must not travel outside of the Comox Valley unless accompanied by an adult of at least 25 years of age or as part of the International Program; and
 - l. must maintain an up-to-date Citizenship and Immigration Canada Study Permit.

My representations:

2. I represent to the School District that my child has no history of engaging in criminal behaviour or sexual misconduct.
3. I know of no reason why my child cannot successfully participate in the School District's International Student Program.
4. I understand that Canada is a culturally diverse country and that my child will be expected to respect people of other sexes, races, religious and cultural backgrounds.
5. I understand and agree that any information included in my child's application for participation in the International Student Program in School District No. 71 Comox Valley is incorporated into and forms part of this agreement and I represent that it is true.
6. I agree that the School District may end this agreement at any time, without notice and without refunding any

tuition paid, and may send my child home at my expense if:

- a. any information in my child's application for admission is untrue;
- b. my child breaches any of the obligations set out in paragraph 1; or
- c. my child is unable to perform or is not performing to a reasonable academic standard (grade average of less than C- or equivalent).

Fee Schedule and Refund Policy

7. In the event that my child does not come to Canada or decides not to attend or to leave the School District's International Program, I agree that the following terms will apply:
 - a. The application fee is non-refundable in any circumstances.
 - b. For students in their first year of participation in the International Student Program, the following will apply:
 - i. the full tuition fee, less the application fee, will be refunded upon receipt of satisfactory evidence that the Study Permit was not approved by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC);
 - ii. Forty five percent (45%) of the tuition fee, less the application fee and homestay placement fee, will be refunded if the student withdraws prior to commencement of the program;
 - iii. no tuition refund will be granted, for any reason, if the student withdraws after 30 calendar days of commencing the program.
 - c. If a student indicates they will be returning to the School District's International Program for a second or subsequent year and withdraws prior to commencing the second or subsequent year, the following will apply:
 - i. Forty five percent (45%) of the annual tuition fee will be refunded if they withdraw from the program prior to June 30 of the year in which the second or subsequent year of studies is to commence; and
 - ii. no refund will be provided for any withdrawal after June 30 of the year in which the second or subsequent year of studies is to commence.
 - d. No refund will be provided if a student is dismissed from the program because of a violation of this Agreement.
 - e. In certain circumstances an international fee paying student may become eligible to become a non-fee paying student upon their parent or guardian becoming ordinarily resident in British Columbia. A student may only change their status from fee-paying to non-fee paying before September 30 of the applicable school year. No refund of tuition will be provided to any student whose status changes after September 30th of the applicable school year.

Insurance

8. The Student is obliged at all times to maintain adequate medical and health insurance while in Canada and the School District is not responsible for any loss or damage suffered by the student as a result of failure to maintain adequate insurance. International students are required to enroll in medical insurance through the School District's International Program office for the entire duration of his or her program in the School District. If a student cancels or fails to extend his or her insurance when required, the School District is not responsible for any loss or damage suffered by the student as a result of failure to maintain adequate insurance.

Assumption of Risk

9. I understand that there are risks associated with my child enrolling in the School District and that my child will not be under constant supervision. I understand that medical and health emergencies can occur without warning. I voluntarily assume the risk that my child may suffer illness, injury or another emergency and agree that I will not bring any claim against the School District or any of its employees for any injury suffered by my child while participating in the International Program.
10. I understand that my child may wish to participate in extracurricular activities such as sports teams, field trips, or school clubs. I give my permission for my child to participate in such extracurricular activities if the Custodian in their discretion considers such activity appropriate. However, I understand that the School District may determine not to allow my child to participate in high risk activities such as skiing, surfing, snowboarding, mountain climbing, kayaking or canoeing unless I also provide my consent to that activity.

Collection, Use and Disclosure of Personal Information

11. I understand that for the purposes of my child's participation in the School District's International Program, the School District will collect, use and disclose personal information about me and my child, including information about my child's health and education as well as contact information for me and my child. I

understand that that information will be collected, used and disclosed for the purposes of offering and administering the International Program as permitted by the British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (“FOIPPA”) and the British Columbia School Act and may be shared with school authorities, medical and social service providers, homestay providers, custodians and others as required.

Please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I agree to the use of my and my child’s personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

CheckBox☐ No - I do not agree with the use of my and my child’s personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

Student please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I <Student> agree to the use of my personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

CheckBox☐ No - I <student> do not agree to the use of my personal information for purposes consistent with the above

12. I agree that under FOIPPA, the School District has the legal authority to collect personal information about students and their families for educational and related purposes. The personal information collected by the School District may include images of identifiable students including class photos, individual photos, sporting, and special event photos. It is a tradition in the School District to publish student names and/or photographs of individual students and groups of students commemorating events, or promoting or celebrating participation in various educational, sports and cultural activities. Students’ names, photographs and comments may be published in the School yearbook, newsletters, honour rolls, programs, calendars, annual reports, and the School or School District webpage. While such activities promote student achievement and accomplishments, the School District recognizes that there may be sensitivities to publishing such images where they name and/or identify students. Accordingly, I agree that my child’s name, photograph or comments relating to these types of School activities may be used for these purposes.

Please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I agree to the use of my child’s personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

CheckBox☐ No - I do not agree with the use of my child’s personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

Student please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I <Student> agree to the use of my personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

CheckBox☐ No - I <Student> do not agree to the use of my personal information for purposes consistent with the above.

13. From time to time, teachers may use various websites and applications that store data outside Canada, such as Google Docs, Prezii, or NoodleBib. Parents and students must be aware that student information may reside on servers not located in Canada and their consent is required to use such websites. Students are expected to use their school district-assigned email address and follow teacher guidelines when using website applications.

Parent please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I give my consent for my child, for learning purposes, to use website applications where servers are located outside Canada.

CheckBox☐ No - I do not give my consent for my child, for learning purposes, to use website applications where servers are located outside Canada.

Student please initial: _____

CheckBox☐ Yes - I <Student> give my consent for learning purposes, to use website applications where servers are located outside Canada.

CheckBox☐ No - I <student> do not give my consent, for learning purposes, to use website applications where servers are located outside Canada..

Termination of Participation in International Program

14. I understand that my child's participation in the International Program may be terminated at the discretion of the Administrators of the International Program without any refund of fees, and that my child may be sent home at my expense if he or she does not adhere to the School District rules, standards, and instructions as set forth in the school's agenda, handbook and this Agreement and any related policies or guidelines.
15. I agree that the School District is not liable for any loss suffered by my child or me as a result of any labour dispute that may affect the delivery of an educational program.

TERMS THAT APPLY WHEN PARTICIPATING IN HOMESTAY PROGRAM

16. As a participant in the School District's International Program Homestay option, the terms and conditions set out in this part will apply.
17. The student agrees to follow the Host Family guidelines outlined in the Student Orientation Manual, and the house rules of the host family.
18. The student agrees that in the event of a problem or disagreement with his or her host family, which cannot be resolved, the Host Family Coordinator will be notified promptly for assistance.
19. The student agrees to cooperate with his/her homestay and respect their rules and guidelines.
20. The student agrees to complete the student travel request form, with his/her Host Parent(s), at least five (5) days before departure and receive approval from the School District's International Student Program District Principal or designate.
21. The student will be provided basic Internet access including wifi at no cost, subject to reasonable limits on data usage.
22. The student will be provided with a key to the house (and to their bedroom, if a lock is installed).
23. The student understands that s/he is ultimately responsible for all of his/her own personal entertainment costs and personal supplies, including school stationary supplies.
24. The Host Family is not responsible for housing the student's visiting family members (if any) during the course of the year unless otherwise agreed. The student will not invite visitors/friends into the home to visit or study unless given specific permission to do so by his/her Host Family. The student will never have visitors/friends stay overnight in their bedroom or elsewhere without prior permission from the Host Family and/or Homestay Coordinator. The student will not stay overnight other than in the Host Family home without prior permission from the Host Parents and/or the Homestay Coordinator.
25. The student will share the same responsibilities to the Host Parents and to the general household as those held by the family's own children of similar age. The student agrees to follow all house rules regarding behavior, curfews, attendance at meals, etc. and to occasionally share in the performance of household duties normally undertaken by the household's own children.
26. The student understands that the Host Family will provide guidance and supervision to the student consistent with that which would be provided by a careful and prudent parent.
27. The School District may at any time change the Homestay arrangements, including, without limitation, moving the student to a different Host Family.

PROVISIONS THAT APPLY TO THIS ENTIRE AGREEMENT

Forum for Dispute Resolution

28. I agree that any dispute arising under the interpretation, application or performance of this agreement or in any way arising out of my child's participation in the School District's International Program will be resolved in a British Columbia Court and I agree that I will not bring proceedings in any other court or jurisdiction and irrevocably attorn to the jurisdiction of British Columbia courts.

Release

29. I waive and release all claims against the School District for injury, loss, damage, accident, delay or expense resulting from my child's participation in the School District's International Program. I also release the School District and agree to indemnify it, with regard to any financial obligations or liabilities that the School District may incur as a result of claims by others, or that my child may personally have or incur, or any damage or injury to the person or property of others that my child may cause while participating in the International Program.

30. I understand that the School District is not responsible for any loss or injury suffered by my child or me. If my child becomes ill or incapacitated, the School District may take such actions as it considers necessary, including securing medical treatment and transporting my child home at his or her own expense. I release the School District from all liability related to such actions.

Consent to Medical Treatment

- 31. I authorize the School District and, if applicable, my child’s Homestay Parents to consent to any x-ray examination, anaesthetic, medical or surgical diagnosis or treatment or hospital care which is deemed advisable by and is rendered under the general supervision of any licensed physician or surgeon, whether such treatment or diagnosis is rendered at the office of such physician or at a hospital.
- 32. It is understood that this authorization is not given in advance of any specific diagnosis, treatment or hospital care being required but is given to provide authority and power on the part of the School District to give specific consent to any and all such diagnoses, treatment or hospital care such physician may deem advisable.

Amendment

33. This Agreement with the School District cannot be modified or interpreted except in writing by the School District.

Please Complete the Agreement Below:

I, _____ [Parent/Guardian (circle one)], agree to the participation of _____ (Name of Student) on the terms set out in this agreement and I have read and understand the terms of this international student agreement and agree to comply with this agreement and that these terms and conditions are binding on me and on _____ (Name of Student).

Signature [Parent/Guardian (circle one)]

Date

I, _____ (Name of Student) have read and understood the terms of this international student agreement and agree to comply with this agreement and that these terms and conditions are binding on me.

Signature

Date